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U.S. Army's Modular Redesign: Issues for Congress

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U.S. Army's Modular Redesign: Issues for Congress

Summary

In what the Army describes as the “most significant Army restructuring in the past 50 years,” the Army is redesigning its current 10 active duty division force to a 43 or 48 brigade-level unit of action or UA force by FY2007. The Army National Guard will also redesign its force structure in a similar fashion. The addition of up to 15 additional active duty and the conversion of Army National Guard brigades into 31 UA brigade combat teams could provide an additional force pool of deployable units to ease the burden on units presently deployed, and possibly to shorten the length of time that units are deployed on operations. The Army has two other concurrent initiatives underway that it considers inextricably linked to its brigade-centric redesign: rebalancing to create new “high demand” units and stabilizing the force to foster unit cohesion and enhance predictability for soldiers and their families. Both initiatives involve substantial policy, organizational, and personnel changes from FY2004 - FY2009.

Some experts believe that modular redesign, selective rebalancing, and stabilizing of the Army are prudent actions that should provide the Army with additional deployable units and also eventually bring stability to soldiers and their families. As long as no additional significant long term troop commitments arise, many feel that these initiatives could help ease the stress on both the active and reserve forces. As the Army continues its modular conversion, it may have to contend with personnel and equipment shortages which could impede plans to build this new force as intended. Some analysts and government officials also question if the Army can afford both its Future Combat System (FCS) program and its modularity program. In addition to funding considerations, recruiting and retention and equipment issues could also affect the Army's modularization plans.

Rebalancing and stabilization efforts are currently underway but at this early stage, it is difficult to gauge their impact on the modularization process. Where these new units of action will eventually be based is also of interest to many analysts, and the Global Basing Strategy as well as the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process will likely influence where the Army will base its forces. With a number of active duty brigades already converted to the UA structure and the modular 3rd Infantry Division presently serving in Iraq, the 109th Congress might examine how effectively these new UAs perform in an operational setting and how potential personnel and equipment shortages could affect the Army's plans to convert the rest of the Army into the Army Modular Force (AMF). This report will be updated.

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U.S. Army's Modular Redesign: Issues for Congress

Issues For Congress

The United States Army is undertaking a total organizational redesign of its combat and associated support units to better meet current and future operational requirements. This redesign effort, as well as associated rebalancing and stabilization initiatives, are deemed important by proponents as they are intended to sustain both the active and reserve Army through a potentially long term, manpower and resource intensive war on terror.

The overall issue facing Congress is how well the Army's modularity program is progressing and what are some of the issues affecting this major redesign effort. Also of critical importance is the Army's ability to fund both the Future Combat System (FCS) program and its modularity program concurrently. Key oversight questions can be summarized as follows:

- How well are the Army's first two modular units performing in Iraq and what has been learned during these operations that could affect the modularization of the rest of the Army?
- What are the specific modularity-related personnel and equipment shortages facing the Army?
- What is the Army's current basing plan for its modular forces and how might these plans be effected by the global repositioning of forces as well as the FY2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process?
- How are the Army's complementary force rebalancing and stabilization efforts progressing?

Congress' decisions on these and other related issues could have significant implications for U.S. national security, Army funding requirements, and future congressional oversight activities. This report addresses the U.S. Army's redesign of its current force structure, based on large divisions, into one based on brigade-level modular "units of action" (UA).¹

¹ According to Department of the Army Pamphlet 10-1, "Organization of the United States Army," dated June 14, 1994, a division consists of approximately 10,000 to 18,000 soldiers and a brigade consists of approximately 3,000 to 5,000 soldiers.

Background

What the Army Intends to Achieve by Modularization

The Army maintains that by organizing the Army around UA Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs) and Support Units of Action (SUA), that it will be able to “better meet the challenges of the 21st century security environment and, specifically, jointly fight and win the Global War on Terrorism.”² Accordingly, the Army hopes that modularization will result in:

- “At least a 30 percent increase in the combat power of the active component of the force”;
- “An increase in the rotational pool of ready units by at least 50 percent”;
- “Creation of a deployable joint-capable headquarters”;
- “Force design upon which the future network centric developments [Future Combat System] can be readily applied”;
- “Reduced stress on the force through a more predictable deployment cycle:”
 - “One year deployed and two years at home station for the active component”;
 - “One year deployed and four years at home station for the Reserve Force”;
 - “One year deployed and five years at home station for the National Guard Force”; and
 - “Reduced mobilization times for the reserve component as a whole.”³

Some, however, question some of the Army’s claims. A recent Congressional Budget Office (CBO) study, “Options for Restructuring the Army” notes the following:

The modularity initiative will boost the number of combat forces available to the Army by up to 5 percent. But it may require an additional 60,000 personnel to do so (or twice the temporarily authorized increase), and it will make the Army more reliant on reserve support units. Moreover, modularity is unlikely to lead to substantial improvements in deployment times.⁴

² *Army Strategic Planning Guidance 2005*, January 15, 2005, p. 9.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Congressional Budget Office (CBO) Study, “Options for Restructuring the Army,” May 2005, p. Xii.

Modular Conversions in FY2004

In FY2004, the Army began converting three of its ten active duty divisions into modular forces. Two of these divisions — the 3rd Infantry Division from Ft. Stewart, Georgia and the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) from Ft. Campbell, Kentucky — were totally converted in FY2004 and their respective division headquarters were converted into UE x's - headquarters units which are designed to command up to six UAs as well as Supporting Units of Action. The 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry) from Ft. Drum, New York also began its modular conversion in FY2004 by adding a third UA brigade combat team as well as converting its division headquarters to a UE x structure. A fourth UA is scheduled to be added to the 10th Mountain Division in FY2005 and will be stationed at Ft. Polk, Louisiana at the Joint Readiness Training Center.⁵ Also in 2004, the Army's third Stryker Brigade Combat Team (SBCT) will be stood up as part of Hawaii-based the 25th Infantry Division (Light).⁶

In March 2005, the converted 3rd Infantry Division was sent back to Iraq for a year-long deployment.⁷ The 3rd Infantry Division led the U.S. assault on Baghdad in March of 2003 under the Army's traditional three brigade, division design and experts suggest that the current deployment of the reconfigured 3rd Infantry Division will yield a significant amount of valuable information which could help with ongoing and future modular conversions. The 101st Airborne Division, which also converted in FY2004, is slated to return to Iraq for the second time in late summer or early fall of 2005.⁸

Modular Conversions in FY2005

In addition to the creation of the 10th Mountain Division's fourth UA in 2005, a number of other conversions are planned to occur this year. The 4th Infantry Division at Ft. Hood, Texas is scheduled to begin its modularization, with the division headquarters converting to a UE x. The 1st Corps headquarters, stationed at Ft. Lewis, Washington is planned to be downgraded and converted to a UE x in 2005

⁵ Matthew Cox, "Army Announces Locations for Its 10 New Brigades," *Army Times*, July 23, 2004.

⁶ The SBCTs are organized around motorized infantry battalions and have a unique reconnaissance, surveillance, and target acquisition (RSTA) squadron and are intended to be used primarily in small-scale contingency operations in complex and urban terrain in a variety of roles ranging from combat to stability operations. These forces are considered "medium" forces and were viewed by the Army's previous Chief of Staff — General Eric Shinseki — as an interim forces until Future Combat System (FCS) equipped brigades were fielded. Under new transformation plans, Stryker units will remain part of the Future Force.

⁷ Donna Miles, "Two Years in Iraq: 3rd ID Returns with New Mission, Focus," American Forces Information Services, March 22, 2005.

⁸ Conversation with the 101st Airborne Division Public Affairs Officer, April 12, 2005.

and it has been reported that the Army is attempting to station the former 1st Corps headquarters at Camp Zama, Japan.⁹

In FY2005, the 25th Infantry Division plans to stand up its fourth UA, with an airborne capability for forced entry operations, at Ft. Richardson, Alaska, and the 4th Infantry Division plans to add a fourth UA at Ft. Hood.¹⁰ Also in 2005, the 172nd Separate Infantry Brigade stationed at Ft. Richardson, Alaska is scheduled to convert to the Army's third SBCT.

The Modular Army FY2006 and Beyond

Modularization Plans FY2006 - FY2007

In FY2006, the Army plans to convert three division headquarters — the Ft. Hood, Texas-based, 1st Cavalry Division, the 25th Infantry Division (Light), and the 82nd Airborne Division from Ft. Bragg, North Carolina — to the UE x structure. These division's current brigades are scheduled to convert to UAs during this time period. The 1st Cavalry Division and the 82nd Airborne Division are scheduled to build a fourth UA, respectively and the 25th Infantry Division (Light) will build two additional UAs. The 1st Cavalry Division's fourth UA is planned to be stationed at Ft. Bliss, Texas. The 25th Infantry's third UA will be stationed at Ft. Benning, Georgia and the fourth UA at Ft. Riley, Kansas. In addition, the 173rd Airborne Brigade stationed in Vincenzo, Italy is scheduled to add about 2,000 soldiers and become a UA and the Army plans to activate its fourth SBCT at Ft. Lewis, Washington, when the 2nd Cavalry Regiment — the former opposing forces at the Army's Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) — converts to a SBCT.

According to the 2005 Army Modernization Plan dated February 2005, the Army will decide in FY2006 whether or not to add five additional UA brigade combat teams (BCTs) to the Active component, eventually resulting in 48 Active component UA BCTs.¹¹ According to sources, the Army has already decided this year not to add the additional five UA BCTs in FY2007 due to anticipated personnel and funding shortages.¹² In addition, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) reports that the Army is currently considering adding an additional combat battalion

⁹ Hal Bernton, "No Decision Yet on Shift of I Corps Headquarters," *Seattle Times*, November 5, 2004.

¹⁰ Matthew Cox, "Army Announces Locations for Its 10 New Brigades," *Army Times*, July 23, 2004.

¹¹ 2005 Army Modernization Plan, February 2005, p. 5.

¹² From discussions during the Eisenhower Series Conference, "The United States Army in Asia: Legacies of the Past, Current Challenges, and Prospects for the Future," March 31, 2005, Alexandria, Virginia and Lisa Troshinsky, "Official: Army Could Decide by 2007 to Permanently Boost End Strength," *Aerospace Daily & Defense Report*, April 12, 2005.

to the UAs that could have further personnel and equipment implications for the Army's modularization efforts.¹³

In FY2007, the Army plans to convert the headquarters of the Korea-based 2nd Infantry Division to the UE x structure as well as the headquarters of the Germany-based 1st Armored Division and the 1st Infantry Division. If the Army does decide to add five additional UAs in FY2007, two are scheduled to be stood up in the 2nd Infantry Division, one each in the 1st Armored and 1st Infantry Division, and an additional non-aligned infantry UA would also be created. Also in FY2007, the Army's fifth SBCT is scheduled to be activated under the 25th Infantry Division (Light).

The Army's modernization and campaign plans call for the modularization of the Active Army to be completed by the end of FY2007 but it is not unreasonable to assume that modularization activities will extend beyond 2007. Some suggest that personnel, equipment, and budget demands, as well as modifications to UAs based on experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan could extend the Army's modularization window beyond 2007.

National Guard Modularization

The Army National Guard is scheduled to start its modularization efforts in FY2005. One National Guard division headquarters is scheduled to be converted into a UE x in FY2005 and three National Guard combat brigades are scheduled to be converted to UAs. The Army's 2005 Modernization Plan calls for a total of 34 UA BCTs by 2010 and the following table depicts Army National Guard UE x and UA conversions from FY2006 through FY2010:

Table 1. Army National Guard Modular Conversions, FY2006-2010

Fiscal Year (FY)	UE x Conversions	UA BCT Conversions
2006	2	6
2007	2	6
2008	2	7*
2009	1	6
2010	0	6
Total	7	31

* This total includes a National Guard Stryker Brigade Combat Team (SBCT).

¹³ Testimony before the Subcommittee on Tactical Air and Land Forces, House Armed Services Committee, GAO-05-443T, "Force Structure: Preliminary Observations on Army Plans to Implement and Fund Modular Forces," Government Accountability Office (GAO), March 16, 2005, p. 2.

Many experts maintain that Army National Guard modularization efforts will be subject to the same personnel, equipment, and budgetary influences that will likely affect Active Army modularization plans. Some suggest that these issues will present even more of a challenge in the National Guard, given recently publicized recruiting and retention shortfalls and equipment shortages.

Support Unit Modularization

The Army has further defined its modular supporting units in terms of personnel, functions, and numbers of units to be developed. These Support Units of Action (SUAs) are¹⁴

- **Aviation Brigade:** Consisting of between 2,600 to 2,700 personnel and a variety of Army aviation assets.
- **Fires Brigade:** Consisting of between 1,200 and 1,300 personnel, the Fires Brigade is to have a mix of cannon, rocket, and missile artillery systems and is to be able to employ Joint fires (Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force) as well.
- **Maneuver Enhancement Brigade:** Consisting of 435 personnel, the Maneuver Enhancement Brigade is to have engineer, military police, nuclear, biological, and chemical (NBC) defense, and air defense units assigned to it. In addition, the brigade could also have explosive ordnance disposal and civil affairs units assigned to it if required.
- **Battlefield Surveillance Brigade:** Consisting of 997 personnel, the Battlefield Surveillance Brigade is to consist of an intelligence battalion, support troops, and a long-range surveillance detachment. In addition, the brigade can be augmented with special forces units as well as additional unmanned aerial vehicles.
- **Sustainment Brigade:** Consisting of 487 personnel, the Sustainment Brigade is to have medical, finance, human resources, ammunition, transportation, maintenance, and supply and service units.

¹⁴ U.S. Army Briefing, Modular Forces Overview, January 19, 2005.

The Army currently plans to field the following numbers of SUAs as indicated in **Table 2**.

Table 2. Numbers of Active, Guard, and Reserve Support Units of Action (SUAs)

Type of SUA	Number to be Fielded
Aviation Brigade	25
Fires Brigade	11
Maneuver Enhancement Brigade	16
Battlefield Surveillance Brigade	5
Sustainment Brigade	35
TOTAL	92

Source: U.S. Army Paper, "The Army Modular Force and Future Combat Systems Strategy," Version 1.2, April 2005, p. 16.

Some analysts observe that there is still a great deal of detail lacking regarding SUAs. According to GAO, the Army has not yet finalized the design of higher echelon (above UE x level) and support units and that until these designs are final, the Army will not know the types and quantities of personnel and equipment needed to fully implement modular redesign.¹⁵ The Army reportedly plans to field 92 SUA brigades by FY2009 - 2010 which, some contend, creates a number of concerns. One concern is that while most or all of the active Army's combat brigades will be transformed to the UA structure by 2007, the rest of the Army will still be organized along traditional lines. Exacerbating this concern is that a substantial number of soldiers and selected equipment from these supporting units were incorporated into the UAs, leaving the supporting units with only a residual support capability. Although UAs — theoretically — should be more self-supporting, some question the ability of these "down-sized" support units to provide UAs with required support.

Another concern is that these support units, as they develop and come into being, will compete with the UAs for both personnel and equipment. Support unit of action development will likely occur in an environment of personnel shortages attributed to lower enlistment and retention rates and that of a high demand for equipment, particularly wheeled vehicles and communications equipment, complicated by both combat losses and wear resulting from greater than anticipated operational usage in Iraq and Afghanistan. With limited personnel and equipment resource, as well as budget constraints, the Army will likely give resourcing priorities to UA BCTs which could result in even more pronounced shortages in manning and equipping the new SUAs.

¹⁵ Testimony before the Subcommittee on Tactical Air and Land Forces, House Armed Services Committee, GAO-05-443T, "Force Structure: Preliminary Observations on Army Plans to Implement and Fund Modular Forces," Government Accountability Office (GAO), March 16, 2005, p. 2.

Cost Considerations

FY2005 Costs

In DOD's FY2005 Supplemental Request, DOD requests \$ 5 billion in FY2005 for Army modularization in the following budget categories:

Table 3. FY2005 Supplemental Request for Army Modularization

Category	Dollars in Millions
Operations and Maintenance	24.8
Research, Development, Test and Evaluation	3
Military Construction	261
Procurement of Equipment and Weapons	4711.2
Total	5,000

Source: Information in this table is taken from the Department of Defense FY2005 Supplemental Request, Chapter 1: Force Restructuring, Detailed Justification, February 2005, p. 11.

To date, Congress has viewed this request favorably but with reservations. In H.Rept. 109-16, Making Emergency Supplemental Appropriations for the Fiscal Year Ending September 30, 2005, and For Other Purposes, the committee reports that

Though concerns are being raised about the advisability of funding this Army restructuring program through emergency supplemental appropriations, the Committee is compelled to fully fund the Army request at this time by an urgency to address the significant challenges the Army now faces.¹⁶

The Committee also directed the Secretary of Defense to

Submit to the congressional defense committees a report no later than July 1, 2005, detailing the Department's long-range plan for executing and funding Army modularity. The report should identify personnel and equipment requirements, unit restructuring timelines, and associated costs.¹⁷

The Senate, in S.Rept. 109-52 on the FY2005 Emergency Supplemental, cautions DOD and the Army that:

The Department has now had ample time to incorporate requirements to support Modularity into its annual budget requests. The Committee is unlikely to regard

¹⁶ H.Rept. 109-16, Making Emergency Supplemental Appropriations for the Fiscal Year Ending September 30, 2005, and For Other Purposes, March 11, 2005, p. 6.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 7.

supplemental appropriations as an appropriate vehicle for future efforts supporting modularity.¹⁸

Although Congress has been supportive of modularity, it can be inferred that Congress has been less than pleased with DOD and the Army in terms of planning and budgeting and that the Army's assumption that modularity would be paid for through supplemental appropriations¹⁹ appears to be in jeopardy.

Modularity Cost Estimates²⁰

According to GAO, modularity costs are "substantial and likely to grow." Army cost estimates have increased significantly since January 2004 when the Army estimated that it would cost \$20 billion from FY2004 - FY2011, based on a "rough order of magnitude estimate, to increase the number of active Army brigade combat teams from 33 to 48. In July 2004, the Army added \$ 8 billion to reorganize the reserve component — bringing the cost for the entire force to \$28 billion.

In March 2005, the Army revised their estimate and now estimate that modularity will cost at total of \$ 48 billion from FY2005 - FY2011, a 71% increase over the earlier \$28 billion estimate. This new estimate covers the total costs for 43 active component brigades including upgrades to the existing 33 brigades and the creation of 10 new brigades, as well as 34 brigades in the Army National Guard.

GAO believes that there are additional factors which will likely make modularity costs exceed the current \$ 48 billion estimate.

- The Army's current \$ 48 billion estimate does not use the tested UA design as the basis for determining equipment costs. Instead, the \$48 billion figure reflects costs for a lesser amount of equipment than called for in the tested design.
- If the Army does decide to add five additional UA BCTs or if it plans to add an additional maneuver battalion to some or all UAs, modularity costs could increase significantly. These costs would include additional soldiers needed above and beyond existing force structure as well as costs for equipment, facilities, and training.
- While the Army's current estimate includes costs for permanent facilities needed for UA BCTs, plans for constructing these facilities remain uncertain due to pending decisions from the Base

¹⁸ S.Rept. 109-52, Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense, the Global War on Terror, and Tsunami Relief, 2005, April 6, 2005, pp. 33-34.

¹⁹ "The Army Campaign Plan (Unclassified)," The Department of the Army, March 31, 2004, p. 5.

²⁰ Information in this section is taken from GAO Testimony before the Subcommittee on Tactical Air and Land Forces, House Armed Services Committee, GAO-05-443T, "Force Structure: Preliminary Observations on Army Plans to Implement and Fund Modular Forces," Government Accountability Office (GAO), March 16, 2005, pp. 8-10.

Realignment and Closure (BRAC)²¹ process as well as the planned restationing of forces from overseas.

Modularity Versus the Future Combat System (FCS)²²

According to reports, the Army plans to tell the Department of Defense that it can fund both modularity and the Future Combat System (FCS).²³ This response to DOD is a requirement originating from DOD's Program Budget Decision (PBD) 753 dated December 23, 2004 which "Direct(s) the Army to submit to the Deputy Secretary of Defense by April 1, 2005, an executable plan that rationalizes and integrates its Future Combat System (FCS) and modularity programs."²⁴ In addition, the Army reportedly will establish an "Army Modular Force Integration Office" to formally link the FCS and modularity programs.²⁵

Some reportedly question the Army's ability to fund both programs. In his opening statement during a March 16, 2005 Tactical Air and Land Forces Subcommittee hearing on FCS, committee chairman, Representative Curt Weldon, noted that:

FCS and modularity are costly programs. FCS will require \$ 25 billion in R&D alone through 2011. The current plan for modularizing the Army will cost at least \$ 69 billion between 2005 and 2011. However, of the \$ 69 billion, only \$ 48 billion has been programmed. And some estimate modularity costs will reach as high as \$ 90 billion, including all potential costs of procurement, operations and maintenance, military construction and replenishment of pre-positioned stocks. Proceeding concurrently with modularity and FCS creates a challenging fiscal dilemma for the Army.²⁶

When asked by Representative Weldon if the Government Accountability Office (GAO) believed that we could afford both programs [FCS and modularity] as currently planned, GAO's witness, Paul Francis, GAO Director of Acquisition and Sourcing Management stated:

²¹ For additional information on BRAC, see CRS Report RL32216, *Military Bases Closures: Implementing the 2005 Round*, by David E. Lockwood.

²² For additional information on the Future Combat System (FCS) see CRS Report RL32888, *The Army's Future Combat Systems (FCS): Background and Issues for Congress*, by Andrew Feickert.

²³ Jen DiMascio, "Plans Maintain PBD 753 Funding Level Past FY-11: Army to Tell Defense Department it Can Fund Modularity and FCS," *Inside the Army*, Vol. 17, No. 14, April 11, 2005, pp. 1 and 6.

²⁴ DOD's Program Budget Decision (PBD) 753, December 23, 2004, p. 1.

²⁵ Jen DiMascio, "Plans Maintain PBD 753 Funding Level Past FY-11: Army to Tell Defense Department it Can Fund Modularity and FCS," p. 6.

²⁶ Hearing of the Tactical Air and Land Forces Subcommittee, House Armed Services Committee on the Future Combat System, March 16, 2005, p. 4.

Mr. Chairman, I think right now we'd say, if everything went perfectly, just as planned, if modularity costs \$ 48 billion and we could bring the FCS development in for \$ 30 billion, I think the numbers work. If things don't go as planned, I think that there is going to be a real challenge here.²⁷

Critics maintain that, given traditional DOD program cost growths of 20 to 40 percent, that the Army is highly unlikely to stay within their budget for either program.²⁸ This being the case, some believe that program trade offs between modularity and FCS will become inevitable if program costs do in fact exceed program budgets.

Non-Budgetary Issues Affecting Modularization

Personnel Issues

In its testimony to Congress, GAO suggested that its preliminary work indicated that there were "significant shortfalls in the Army's capacity to equip and staff units."²⁹ While specific information on personnel shortages in terms of rank, military occupational specialties, and numbers have not been made public by the Army, GAO reports that modular BCTs will require additional truck drivers, civil affairs specialists, and military police and that military intelligence specialists were a critical shortage.³⁰ The Army has reportedly stated that it will require an additional 2,800 military intelligence specialists by the end of FY2005 to meet near-term shortages and an additional 6,200 by 2010 to meet modularity requirements.³¹

Recruiting and Retention. Given the Army's current recruiting and retention challenges, it is possible that the Army may be unable to rectify these shortages which could have a significant impact on implementing modularity. The Army has reportedly missed its April recruiting goal, making it the third consecutive monthly shortfall and the Army National Guard and Reserve are facing even greater difficulties.³² The Army Reserve has reportedly not met a monthly recruiting goal since December 2004³³ and despite strengthened recruiting efforts, Guard and

²⁷ Ibid., p. 12.

²⁸ Jen DiMascio, "Weldon Wary of Future Comanche-Like "Embarrassment: GAO Says FCS, Modularity Costs Could Increase More than Anticipated," *Inside the Army*, Vol. 17, No. 11, March 21, 2005, p. 10.

²⁹ GAO Testimony before the Subcommittee on Tactical Air and Land Forces, House Armed Services Committee, GAO-05-443T, "Force Structure: Preliminary Observations on Army Plans to Implement and Fund Modular Forces," Government Accountability Office (GAO), March 16, 2005, p 5.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

³² "Recruiting Goal Missed for Third Straight Month," *Associated Press*, May 2, 2005.

³³ Ibid.

Reserve officials have said that many of their shortages are likely to be resolved in the foreseeable future.³⁴ Of particular concern is the development of leaders, with an estimated shortage of 5,000 captains and 7,000 officers in other grades currently confronting the Guard and Reserve.³⁵

While recruiting may be problematic, retention (the rate at which military personnel voluntarily decide to remain in the military) has been relatively favorable in the Active component.³⁶ While FY2005 Army active duty retention rates fell short for first term-enlistees and mid-career enlisted personnel, these rates are ahead of FY2004 first quarter rates and the final FY2004 retention rate eventually exceeded its goal, so it is possible that the Army might also achieve its FY2005 retention goal by year's end.³⁷ Retention, however, in the Guard and Reserve is not as favorable. According to DOD, retention in the Guard and Reserve to date are well behind FY2004 rates,³⁸ which combined with recruiting shortfalls, could result in pronounced personnel shortages in the Guard and Reserve which could have an adverse impact on modularity.

Possible Limitations of Female Soldiers in Forward Support Companies. Recent reports concerning female soldiers in UA Forward Support Companies (FSC), although focused on the women in combat issue, suggest that there may be “insufficient male soldiers in the inventory to fill forward support companies and that the pool of available male recruits may be too small to sustain the force.”³⁹ FSCs are intended to collocate with and provide maintenance and logistic support to UA combat battalions which, according to some is a violation of the Army's 1994 policy which not only banned women from units that engage in direct ground combat such as infantry and armor but also excluded women “from assignments below brigade level whose primary mission is to engage in direct combat on the ground.”⁴⁰

³⁴ Harold Kennedy, “Army Guard, Reserves Confront Long-Term Personnel Problems,” *National Defense*, May 2005.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Information in this section is taken from CRS Report RS22012, *Recruiting and Retention: A Brief Overview of FY2004 and FY2005 Results for Active Component Personnel*, by Lawrence Kapp.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 4.

³⁸ Data provided to CRS from the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Assistant Director for Military Personnel Policy, April 21, 2005.

³⁹ Rowan Scarborough, “Army Agrees No Women in Combat for Now,” *Washington Times*, January 13, 2005; Bryan Bender, “U.S. Women Get Closer to Combat,” *Boston Globe*, January 26, 2005; Rowan Scarborough, “Women in Combat Ban Again at Issue,” *Washington Times*, February 4, 2005.

⁴⁰ Department of Defense Memorandum, Subject: Direct Ground Combat Definition and Assignment Rule, January 13, 1994.

In opposition to the Army leadership,⁴¹ the House Armed Services Committee Personnel Subcommittee introduced and passed an amendment to the FY2006 Defense Authorization Bill (H.R. 1815) requiring the Army to prohibit women from serving in any-company sized unit that provides support to combat battalions or their subordinate companies.⁴² This amendment was reportedly modified by the House Armed Services Committee in markup to put into law the Army's policy barring women from assignment to units that engage in direct ground combat and units that could accompany these units into combat.⁴³ In addition, the amendment calls for the Defense Department to conduct a detailed review, to be provided to Congress by March 2006, of the Army's 1994 policy on assigning women, paying special attention of the issue women being "co-located" with combat units.⁴⁴ Some suggest that this issue might influence the assignment of women to FCSs that could have an impact on their ability to support UA combat forces.

Equipment Issues

As previously stated, the Army is also faced with equipment shortages as it implements its modularity program. According to GAO, modular brigade combat teams will "require significant increases in the levels of equipment, particularly command, control, and communications equipment; wheeled vehicles; and artillery and mortars."⁴⁵ Command, control, and communications equipment are of particular concern as they constitute what the Army considers the key enablers for the modular brigade combat teams.

GAO visits to the 3rd Infantry Division (the first Army unit to undergo modular reconfiguration) and the 101st Airborne Division (the Army's second modular unit) suggest that equipment shortages may also have a detrimental impact on unit training. Regarding command, control, and communications equipment, both units reportedly expressed concern that because of these shortages that their soldiers might not be able to achieve proficiency "with some of this high-tech equipment because the equipment is not available in sufficient numbers."⁴⁶ In addition, the GAO report noted that both units were significantly short their authorizations of tactical unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs).

⁴¹ Letter from General Richard A. Cody, Vice Chief of Staff of the Army to Representative Ike Skelton, May 11, 2005.

⁴² Ann Scott Tyson, "Panel Votes to Ban Women from Combat," *Washington Post*, May 12, 2005.

⁴³ Gayle S. Putrich and Anne Plummer, "House Panel Moves Massive Defense Authorization in Marathon Markup," *Congressional Quarterly (CQ)*, May 18, 2005.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ GAO Testimony before the Subcommittee on Tactical Air and Land Forces, House Armed Services Committee, GAO-05-443T, "Force Structure: Preliminary Observations on Army Plans to Implement and Fund Modular Forces," Government Accountability Office (GAO), March 16, 2005, p 6.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

Equipment shortages in the 3rd Infantry and 101st Airborne Divisions — the first two Army divisions to undergo modularization — raises additional issues for consideration. One concern is that if the Army's first two divisions to undergo modularization could not be fully or even adequately equipped for training, what implications does that hold for the Army's eight other active combat divisions that are scheduled for modularization? Some suggest that it would not be unreasonable to assume that these other eight divisions will also likely experience equipment shortages at levels experienced by the 3rd Infantry and 101st Airborne, and perhaps even greater. If this is indeed the case, then questions could arise as to how efficient these partially-equipped brigade combat teams would be. Analysts also note that the 3rd Infantry Division has been recently redeployed to Iraq and that the 101st is scheduled to return to Iraq later this year which raise questions as to whether or not these units were or will be fully equipped when they arrive in Iraq.

National Guard Equipment Issues. Another issue concerns National Guard modularization, currently scheduled to begin this year. Some maintain that equipment shortages for Guard units converting to the modular structure could be even more pronounced than those of active duty units. The National Guard Bureau, Lieutenant General H. Steven Blum, reportedly stated that the Army National Guard was already “under-equipped and “under-resourced “ before the war⁴⁷ — a condition some suggest is historical as Guard units traditionally have older and less equipment than their active duty counterparts.

This condition is further exacerbated in that many Guard units that have deployed have been required to leave their equipment in Iraq for other units, both Active and Guard, to use.⁴⁸ In some instances, Guard units left all but their soldier's individual equipment in Iraq, which has had a significant impact on those unit's ability to train and also to fulfil their state missions, such as disaster relief and homeland defense. Such extreme shortages might also have a significant impact on Guard units converting to modular brigade combat teams.

Demands on Army Depots. Reports suggest that the demands at Army depots to maintain and repair equipment needed in Iraq and Afghanistan is having a detrimental effect on the depots ability to provide equipment for modularization.⁴⁹ The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) in recent testimony to the House Subcommittee on Readiness, noted that as a results of the wars “many of the hundreds of thousands of pieces of equipment that have been used in operations in

⁴⁷ “NGB Chief: Guard Needs \$20 Billion for Equipment,” *National Guard Magazine*, January 2005, p. 12.

⁴⁸ Information in this section is from Wayne Woolley, “Looking for a Fair Fight: Citizen Soldiers Given More Responsibilities Without the Resources,” *New Jersey Star-Ledger*, November 23, 2003 and Christopher Prawdzik, “Fracture Inventory,” *National Guard Magazine*, April 2005.

⁴⁹ See Jonathan Weisman, “Army Repair Posts Scramble to Keep the Troops Equipped,” *Washington Post*, December 13, 2004, p. A01 and Dave Moniz, “Worn-Out Army Equipment to Cost U.S.,” *USA Today*, January 26, 2005, p. 7.

Iraq and Afghanistan are in need of replacement or repair.”⁵⁰ According to CBO, the Army’s trucks are being driven “roughly ten times more miles per year than has been the average over the past several years; tanks and armored vehicles are being driven at rates roughly five times those of peacetime; and helicopters flown at roughly twice peacetime rates.”⁵¹ Adding to the problem of excessive equipment utilization is that equipment and vehicles are also being destroyed as a result of enemy action and in non-combat related activities such as vehicle accidents. Army depots are reportedly confronting four to five times more equipment wear than the Army anticipated and are said to be experiencing significant stress in not only repairing equipment needed for Iraq and Afghanistan, but also trying to meet the Army’s modularity demands.⁵² Given this situation of competing demands on the Army’s industrial base, it is possible that the equipment shortages resulting from unit reorganization and the creation of new brigades might be further exacerbated by demands to repair equipment damaged or worn out by the war.

Basing

The basing of the Army’s modularized forces is affected by a number of factors, some of which are likely outside the Army’s ability to directly control. The Army’s decision to add an additional 10 to 15 active modular brigade combat teams and associated support units of action likely was made on the assumption that no new bases would be constructed for these units and that they would instead be stationed at existing Army as well as other service’s posts and bases. Also affecting the basing of the Army’s modular force is DOD’s 2004 Integrated Presence Global Basing Strategy where reportedly 70,000 U.S. troops and 100,000 of their family members will be withdrawn from their bases in Germany and South Korea to bases in the United States.⁵³ Recommendations for both overseas and domestic base closures made by the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission,⁵⁴ will also likely affect the Army’s final basing decision.

Army’s Preliminary Basing Plans.⁵⁵ The Army, recognizing that Global Rebasing and particularly the 2005 BRAC process could alter its basing plans for

⁵⁰ Statement of Douglas Holtz-Eakin, CBO, on “The Potential Costs Resulting from Increased Usage of Military Equipment in Ongoing Operations,” presented to the Subcommittee on Readiness, House Armed Services Committee, April 6, 2005, p. 1.

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 2.

⁵² See Jonathan Weisman, “Army Repair Posts Scramble to Keep the Troops Equipped,” *Washington Post*, December 13, 2004, p. A01 and Dave Moniz, “Worn-Out Army Equipment to Cost U.S.,” *USA Today*, January 26, 2005, p. 7.

⁵³ “U.S. to Close 35 Percent of Overseas Bases,” *New York Times on the Web*, September 23, 2004.

⁵⁴ For additional information on 2005 BRAC see CRS Report RS22061, *Military Base Closures: The 2005 BRAC Commission*, by Daniel H. Else and David E. Lockwood.

⁵⁵ Information in this section is from Sean D. Naylor, “The Coming Brigade Shuffle: How Adding New Combat Units Will Radically Alter the Army’s U.S. Footprint,” *Army Times*, January 31, 2005, pp. 14-16 and George Cahlink, “Army Decision on New Brigades May Hold Clues to Base Closings,” *GovExec.com*, August 3, 2004.

modular forces has reportedly made some preliminary basing plans. Given modularization and rebasing from Korea and Germany, the Army could potentially be required to find “new homes” for up to 19 new brigade combat teams as well as a number of supporting units. In general, Army posts that already have combat units such as Ft. Bragg, Ft. Carson, and Ft. Hood are scheduled to receive additional brigade combat teams and supporting units and some experts maintain that these bases run a low risk of being recommended for closure under BRAC 2005. Some other posts not normally associated with large combat formations, including National Guard posts, reportedly under consideration for the stationing of active modular brigade combat teams and support units of action include:

- Ft. Knox, KY;
- Ft. Bliss, TX;
- Ft. Polk, LA;
- Ft. Irwin, CA;
- Camp Grayling, MI;
- Ft. Chaffee, AR;
- Yuma Proving Ground, AZ;
- Ft. Irwin, CA;
- Ft. Hunter-Liggett, NV;
- Dugway Proving Ground; UT; and
- Gowen Field, ID.

The Army has stressed that these post are only under consideration and that its final decision on basing units will not be made until after the President certifies the base closure and realignment list and transmits it to Congress in November 2005. The Army reportedly, however, tried to anticipate what posts could be included in BRAC 2005 when making its tentative basing list in order to reduce turbulence that could result from assigning a brigade to a post and then having the post closed under BRAC. The Army’s criteria for choosing its tentative bases included sufficient training areas; ability to support rapid deployment, and base infrastructure.

Overseas Basing Commission Recommendations.⁵⁶ The Overseas Basing Commission in its report recommends that in addition to the Army’s plan to station a Stryker Brigade and a modular aviation brigade in Germany and an airborne brigade combat team in Italy⁵⁷ that one heavy brigade should also remain in Europe. If so approved by the President and Congress, a heavy brigade combat team tentatively planned to be stationed in the United States could instead be stationed somewhere in Europe.

BRAC Recommendations. On May 13, 2005, DOD released its BRAC 2005 Closure and Realignment list. According to the list, none of the posts reportedly under consideration for stationing modular forces were recommended for closure, although a number were recommended for realignment which could either

⁵⁶ Report of the Commission on Review of Overseas Military Facility Structure of the United States to the President and the Congress, May 9, 2005.

⁵⁷ General B.B. Bell, Update on the Impacts of Global Rebased on United States Army Forces in Europe, United States Army, Europe, April 7, 2005.

add or decrement the number of soldiers presently stationed at those posts. Some specific modularity-related recommendations for active Army posts include:⁵⁸

- Ft. Bragg, NC: Activate the 4th Brigade Combat Team and receive relocated Combat Service Support units returning from Europe to support Army modularization;
- Ft. Hood, TX: Relocate a brigade combat team to be activated in FY 06 and a UEx headquarters to Ft. Carson, CO as Ft. Hood does not have sufficient facilities and available maneuver training area to support six permanent heavy BCTs while Ft. Carson does have the capacity;
- Ft. Knox, KY: Relocate the Armor Center and School to Ft. Benning, GA in order to activate an infantry BCT as well as receive relocated engineer, military police, and combat service support units from Europe and Korea;
- Ft. Bliss, TX: Receive 1st Armored Division from Germany and various echelon above division units from Germany and Korea;
- Ft. Riley, KS: Activate a brigade combat team and receive 1st Infantry Division units returning from Germany and various echelon above division units returning from Germany and Korea.

Rebalancing and Stabilizing the Force

Other Critical Army Initiatives

The Army has two other concurrent initiatives underway which have been described as “critical enablers” in the Army’s brigade-centric reconfiguration: rebalancing and stabilizing the force. Both initiatives involve substantial policy, organizational, and personnel changes from FY2004 - FY2009 and some observers contend that these two initiatives may be more difficult to achieve than the creation of 10 to 15 additional brigade-sized units.

Rebalancing the Force

In what the Army describes as its “most significant restructuring in 50 years,” the Army is presently converting a number of units deemed less relevant to the GWOT into units more appropriate to the types of operations ongoing in Iraq and Afghanistan. This change involves over 100,000 active and reserve personnel and involves decreasing certain types of units while increasing others as described in the following table:

⁵⁸ Department of Defense Base Closure and Realignment Report, Volume II Detailed Recommendations, May 2005, pp. A-5 - A-19..

Table 4. Restructuring of Units, FY2004 - FY2009 ⁵⁹

Decrease	Increase
36 - Field Artillery Units	149 - Military Police Units
10 - Air Defense Units	16 - Transportation Units
11 - Engineer Units	9 - Petroleum/Water Distribution Units
19 - Armor Units	8 - Civil Affairs Units
65 - Logistic Units	4 - Psychological Operations Units
	11 - Biological Detection Units

Source: Department of the Army briefing to the media on “Building Army Capabilities,” Feb. 17, 2004.

According to the Army’s 2005 Posture Statement dated February 6, 2005 this rebalancing is underway with more than 34,000 spaces having been converted⁶⁰ although no specifics were provided as to exactly how many new units had been developed under this initiative. The Army further maintains that rebalancing will produce a 50 percent increase in infantry capabilities and similar increases in military police, civil affairs, intelligence, and other “critical skills.”⁶¹ This rebalancing is also intended to place more combat support and combat service support units back into the active component from the Reserves to improve overall deployability and sustainability as well as to reduce requirements for immediate mobilization of Reserve units.⁶²

Stabilizing the Force

This initiative transitions the Army from an individual replacement manning system to a unit-focused system. The objective is to keep soldiers in units longer in order to reduce historically high turnover rates of soldiers and their leaders and to foster unit cohesion and operational effectiveness.⁶³ In addition this initiative is intended to provide stability to Army families and could ultimately save the Army money as it could result in fewer moves for soldiers and their families. The 172nd Separate Infantry Brigade in Alaska was the first unit to implement the unit stability program and four additional brigades are scheduled to implement unit stability in 2005.⁶⁴

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⁶⁰ U.S. Army’s 2005 Posture Statement (Unclassified), February 6, 2005, p. ii.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid., p. 9.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

Potential Oversight Issues for Congress

Modularity “Lessons Learned” From Deployments to Iraq

It is possible that Congress might explore with the Department of Defense and the Army the initial “lessons learned” from the 2005 deployment to Iraq of 3rd Infantry Division and the 101st Airborne Division — the Army’s first two modularized divisions. The performance of these two restructured divisions that participated in the March 2003 ground invasion of Iraq in the traditional divisional structure, will likely be closely scrutinized and extensively documented. The Army has suggested that these operational and combat lessons learned from the current rotation of these two new units will help the Army to refine not only tactics and operational procedures for modular forces but also force structure as well as unit manning, two areas of considerable congressional interest. Congressional exposure to these lessons learned could potentially provide valuable insight to Congress as it performs its oversight and budgetary roles regarding the Army’s transformation to a modular force.

Personnel and Equipment Shortages

Congress may decide to examine the impact of personnel and equipment shortages on modularization of the active Army and National Guard in greater detail. Some contend that personnel, in particular, and equipment shortages could result in the Army not achieving its goals in terms of both timelines for conversion as well as total number of additional brigade combat teams and support units of action created. Such an examination could focus on individual units and identify not only current and projected equipment and personnel shortfalls in those units, but perhaps trends throughout both the active Army and National Guard. Some have questioned the benefit, for example, of creating ten additional active brigades if those brigades and existing brigades will be undermanned and underequipped as a result of modularization, when, under the current divisional configuration, brigades are relatively well-equipped and manned. Given the National Guard’s more pronounced personnel shortfalls and its historic equipment shortages, Congress may opt for a much more detailed examination of shortages as well as the overall timeline to convert Guard units to a modular force.

Basing

Congress might act to review the Army’s evolving basing plans for modular forces, particularly during its examination of 2005 BRAC recommendations, in terms of not only the base’s and the surrounding local community’s ability to support and sustain modular forces but also how these bases support the Army’s vision of an “expeditionary Army.” Some have suggested that BRAC-directed moves, DOD’s 2004 Global Rebasing Initiative, and the Army’s desire to station its forces in a more “expeditionary” posture could result not only in difficulty in deploying these forces in the event of a crisis but also a situation where the Army is in a perpetual state of transit for at least the next decade as units and soldier’s families move to their new

bases.⁶⁵ The Report of the Commission on Review of Overseas Military Facility Structure of the United States to the President and the Congress notes:

That “to launch major realignments of bases and unit configurations at a time when we are in midst of two major conflicts (Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom) takes us to the edge of our capabilities” and the committee “finds no imperative for doing all of this in the short spate of time now planned,” noting that “if we continue at the current pace we are liable to handicap operational capability.”⁶⁶

Given concerns about basing both in the United States and overseas, Congress might choose to review the capacity for bases to accommodate new Army units as well as soldiers and their families and the impact of these moves on local surrounding communities. Congress might also look at the proposed timeline for moving Army units with the view that the proposed timings of these moves could possibly have a detrimental impact on the operational availability of transitioning units.

Rebalancing and Stabilizing the Force

Congress might act to review, in greater detail, the Army’s rebalancing and stabilization initiatives. The Army has characterized these initiatives as “critical” to the modular transformation of the Army, but little is publically known as to how well they are progressing in terms of new units that have been created or how stabilization is affecting unit cohesion or family life for soldiers. Given that these two initiatives involve significant structural and cultural change for the Army, they also likely have significant budgetary implications that some feel are not adequately discussed as part of Army modularity.

⁶⁵ See Esther Schrader, “Iraq Conflict Disrupts U.S. Plans for Military,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 15, 2004; Peter Grier and Faye Bowers, “15 Years After Cold War, A Troop Shift,” *Christian Science Monitor*, August 17, 2004; David S. Cloud, “Pentagon’s Plan to Transfer Troops is Faulted by Panel,” *New York Times*, May 5, 2005.

⁶⁶ Report of the Commission on Review of Overseas Military Facility Structure of the United States to the President and the Congress, May 2005, pp. 4-5.

Additional Reading

CRS Report RL32888. *The Army's Future Combat System (FCS): Background and Issues for Congress.*

CRS Report RS22012. *Recruiting and Retention: A Brief Overview of FY2004 and FY2005 Results for Active Component Personnel.*

CRS Report RL32238. *Defense Transformation: Background and Oversight Issues for Congress.*

CRS Report RS20787. *Army Transformation and Modernization: Overview and Issues for Congress.*

CRS Report RS21754. *Military Forces: What is the Appropriate Size for the United States?*

CRS Report RS20649. *U.S. Military Dispositions: Fact Sheet.*

CRS Report RL31805. *Authorization and Appropriations for FY2004: Defense.*

CRS Report RL32305. *Authorization and Appropriations for FY2005: Defense.*